HURONIA DISTRICT CROWN LAND MANAGEMENT PLAN

Ontario
Ministry of Natural Resources

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Telephone: (705)728-2900

We are pleased to approve the Huronia District Crown Land Management Plan, as official policy for the management and development of this area. The plan reflects this ministry's intent to protect the natural features of the area and maintain and develop the Province's resources.

W. Dan Mansell
District Manager
Huronia District

A. Holder
Regional Director
Central Region

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1. INTRODUCTION

The Huronia District Crown land planning area is approximately 27,000 ha (66,700 acres) located in the northeast corner of the Huronia Administrative District. (Figure 1). It contains portions of six municipalities: the Townships of Matchedash, Orillia and Rama are within the County of Simcoe; the Townships of Georgian Bay and Muskoka Lakes, and the Town of Gravenhurst are within the District Municipality of Muskoka. The Severn River forms a portion of the boundary between the County and the District Municipality and divides the planning area approximately in half.

The Crown land planning program evolved directly from the Huronia District Land Use Guidelines (DLUG) which were approved in 1983. During public review, one of the most contentious issues was a proposal to establish a nature reserve in Matchedash Township. As a result, the proposed nature reserve was deleted from the list of candidate parks. However, it was recognized that the area had important natural values so the District Guidelines committed the ministry to the preparation of a special Crown land management plan for the former candidate park.

The Guidelines also presented four basic terms of reference for the planning process:

- detailed consideration will be given to determining how the protection objectives can best be met;
- the significant contribution of the existing uses, (fishing, hunting, trapping, snowmobiling) to fish and wildlife and general recreation targets will be recognized in the planning;
- the study will recommend whether any portion of the area should be considered for park designation; and
- the planning process will provide for full public involvement.

The ministry decided that management of the former candidate park would be studied within the context of the total Crown land area of the Huronia District. This approach permits comparative evaluation of all Crown land and water areas and will enable the ministry to make more fully informed management decisions.

Resource production and recreation opportunity targets for the study area are presented in this plan. They are based upon the Huronia District targets contained in the District Land Use Guidelines. The plan provides direction for resource managers to the year 2000 on where and how these targets will be achieved in the study area. In some cases, more detailed management and operational plans will be prepared such as a forest management plan, a management plan for the Swift Rapids (formerly called the Wood) deer yard, and provincial park management plans.

The Crown lands within the planning area are part of a mosaic which includes private, municipal and federal lands. To the greatest extent possible this plan will be compatible with other land use plans prepared by municipal and federal agencies. This plan directly affects the management of provincial Crown land only.

An indispensable part of the planning process is public consultation. Three phases of public consultation have occurred in the preparation of this management plan. In the summer of 1985 Phase 1 involved the release of the Terms of Reference. Two information sessions were also held for municipal councillors and local interest groups to publicize the program and identify issues and concerns. During Phase 2 in June 1986, over 300 copies of an Issues Discussion Paper were circulated to interested individuals, local, provincial and national interest groups, municipalities and other government agencies. The resulting comments were carefully considered during the development of the Preliminary Management Plan.

In August of 1986, the third phase of the public consultation program involved wide distribution of the preliminary plan followed by two public information sessions. Public input was instrumental in the process of refining the preliminary plan to produce this final plan document. The results of the public consultation program are summarized in Appendix A.

This plan contains general policy statements on environment, public safety, integrated resource management, access, tourism/economic development and Canada Ontario Rideau-Trent System (CORTS) policies. These are followed by sections dealing with specific resource management programs; timber, mineral aggregate, fisheries, wildlife, areas of natural and scientific interest, parks, general recreation, land administration and water. For each resource program, objectives and targets are presented and an analysis section outlines current production and management programs and discusses the resource potential. Finally, a management strategy states where and how the objectives and targets will be achieved.

The targets are refinements of those given in the Huronia District Land Use Guidelines (DLUG) and where appropriate, the portion of the district target to be achieved on Crown land is presented. In some cases, detailed resource assessments have been completed since DLUG preparation and as a result, changes in some targets will be required.

While a portion of Georgian Bay is within the planning area, management strategies in this plan do not pertain to the bay. The Georgian Bay fishery within the planning area differs significantly from the inland fishery and is managed as a component of the entire Georgian Bay basin. Recreational activity on the bay, especially boating, is not confined to the planning area and since the ministry's mandate in relation to recreational boating has not been defined, only passing reference is made to this activity.

2. GENERAL POLICIES

2.1 ENVIRONMENT

On Crown land the ministry will conduct its activities in an environmentally responsible manner.

Responsibility for identifying and conserving unique, representative or endangered physical, biological, cultural and historical features will be a shared among all ministry programs. Renewable resources will be managed on a biologically sound basis. Non-renewable resources will be managed to meet current demands while recognizing future requirements.

Many of the activities which do and will occur on the Crown land are subject to regulations under the Environmental Assessment Act administered by the Ontario Ministry of the Environment. Most of the management and development activities proposed in the plan will be implemented according to procedures described in class Environmental Assessments (EA) while some others which are not currently subject to an EA are subject to conditions specified under an exemption order. Some activities such as fire control have been exempted from the Act. In all cases, the requirements of the Environmental Assessment Act will be followed where applicable.

2.2 PUBLIC SAFETY

The ministry will seek to eliminate injury, loss of life and to minimize property damage resulting from floods and forest fires.

The ministry will promote the safe pursuit of outdoor recreation and resource utilization activities.

All Crown land except that in the Township of Rama is within the Algonquin Provincial Fire Region. Municipalities within this region are primarily responsible for wild fire prevention and control. This responsibility is shared with the ministry by means of formal agreements. When fire suppression on Crown land involves municipal men and equipment, municipalities will be financially compensated.

In Rama Township the municipality is responsible for Crown land fire prevention and control. This ministry's specialized knowledge is made available to the municipality upon request.

2.3 INTEGRATED RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Integrated resource management is the central management philosophy used by ministry staff to achieve goals, objectives and targets. Integrated management involves the coordination of resource management programs and activities so that long term benefits are optimized and conflicts between programs are minimized. Integration of management programs is intended to ensure the most efficient use of land and water.

The ministry will:

- apply the concept of multiple use to land and water management; The ministry will in most cases undertake two or more compatible activities on the same areas concurrently or sequentially recognizing that in some circumstances management of areas for a single purpose such as extraction, protection or recreation may be necessary.

- ensure that each resource management program contributes to the achievement of other program objectives, to the greatest extent possible;

  Individual resource management plans including those for forestry, wildlife management and Provincial parks will contain policies which address achievement of as many ministry objectives as possible.

- approve resource management initiatives only after they have been reviewed and approved by the District Management Committee (the District Manager and all program supervisors).

Strategies for each resource management program (Section 3) include statements on the ways in which the objectives of other programs can be recognized.

2.4 ACCESS

Access facilities are of benefit to a wide variety of user groups and to all resource management programs. The existing network of access facilities including Crown land access roads and access points will be maintained unless budgetary considerations necessitate otherwise.

Expansion of the network may be required to:

- provide adequate opportunities for access to land by boaters on Georgian Bay and the Severn River;

- permit the construction of new roads over Crown land to service existing cottages;

- provide temporary road access for resource management activities including harvesting and extraction.

Access to Crown land in the Township of Matchedash and the Town of Gravenhurst could be affected by development of a provincial highway between Coldwater and Gravenhurst. This proposal is currently included in the eleven to twenty year construction program of the Ontario Ministry of Transportation and Communications. No corridor has been selected.

Within the next five years the Ontario Ministry of Transportation and Communications will twin Highway 69 from Waubaushene to Port Severn creating a limited access highway.

A Preliminary Design Study was initiated in 1984 to investigate the required expansion of the present two lane Highway 69 corridor between Port Severn and MacTier, (33 kilometers). Actual construction of this section will depend on a demonstrated need, regional and provincial priorities and the availability of funds.

2.5 TOURISM/ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The Ministry of Natural Resources, as the major land holder in the planning area, has the opportunity to support economic development and tourism activity. Tourism in the planning area benefits from the recreational opportunities and support facilities available on Crown land. In addition, resource harvesting such as trapping stimulates economic activity locally.

Traditional outdoor recreation and resource harvesting activities will continue to benefit the local economy. Together with municipalities and private enterprise, the ministry will also consider additional ways that land and resource management can contribute to local economic benefits.

Small areas of Crown land may be made available to adjacent commercial enterprises. However, it must be clearly established that Crown land is required by a business to secure its economic viability.

2.6 CONTRIBUTION TO CANADA-ONTARIO RIDEAU, TRENT-SEVERN CORRIDOR (CORTS) POLICIES

The Severn River portion of the CORTS Corridor, one of Canada's prime recreational resources, bisects the planning area. The Ministry of Natural Resources, through its management programs and activities on the Crown land, will contribute to implementation of policies established to direct the actions of federal, provincial and municipal governments pertaining to recreational development and growth in the corridor. Through implementation of this Crown land management plan, the ministry will contribute to the following policies:

- .formulation of land use plans;
- .protection of open space from inappropriate use;
- .support of tourism and recreation through identification and intensive management of significant wildlife and fisheries habitat; and
- .support of tourism and recreation through provision of recreation facilities such as access points and trails.

3. RESOURCE MANAGEMENT POLICIES

3.1 FOREST MANAGEMENT

3.1.1 Objectives

The objectives for the forest management program are to:

- produce high quality forest products;
- protect soil and water resources from the harmful effects of erosion and improper logging operations;
- provide and protect forest habitat for wildlife; and
- provide suitable conditions for recreational activity.

3.1.2 Targets

To produce an average annual supply of 5000 cubic metres of wood products by the year 2000. The target includes wood for industrial purposes as well as firewood. The firewood component may comprise as much as 75 percent of the annual production.

3.1.3 Resource Analysis

Over the past 30 years, production of forest products from Crown land has been very limited and for the last 10 years, most timber cutting has occurred as part of wildlife habitat improvement projects in the Swift Rapids deer yard. Some scattered fuelwood harvesting has also been occurring in accessible locations.

The limited forest resources of the planning area result from forest fires exposing the thin soils thereby creating poor soil moisture conditions. Less than 28 percent (6500 ha) of the forested Crown land can be classified as production forest (i.e. forest with potential to produce commercial timber). When the production forest areas within the provincially significant areas of natural and scientific interest are subtracted, the area of production forest is 5,800 ha. Potential annual forest productivity within the study area ranges between 0.7 m^3/ha/yr and 3 m^3/ha/yr and averages 2 m^3/ha/yr. This compares to an average potential productivity for the production forest land elsewhere in the district of over 5 m^3/ha/yr.

It has been estimated that 80,000 m^3 of forest products can be produced from the Crown land between the present time and the year 2000. Preparation of this estimate was complicated by several factors. Firstly, the fragile nature of the soils prevents the use of clear cuts as a management technique. Secondly, numerous improvement treatment and/or preparatory cuts will be necessary before harvest cuts may occur. Many of the improvement treatments are non-profit in nature and will be subsidized.

Improvement cuts will be directed at the hard maple, poplar and white pine working groups. Hard maple cuts will result in the establishment of all aged stands. In the poplar working groups, conversion of stands to white pine will be the primary objective. In white pine, thinning and cleaning will produce more uniform spacing and benefit immature white pine.

PARRY SOUND DISTRICT
Gibson River Provincial Park
Six Mile Lake Provincial Park
Horseshoe Lake Road
BEAUSOLEIL ISLAND
GEORGIAN BAY ISLANDS NATIONAL PARK
SEVERN SOUND
Port Severn
Honey Harbour
Wilderness
SIX MILE LAKE
GLOUCESTER POOL
MATCHEDASH TAY TOWNSHIP
SEVERN RIVER
Legend
STUDY AREA
GEORGIAN BAY
LAKE ONTARIO
REVISED OCTOBER 1986

Figure 1

PROVINCIAL PARK, FOREST AND WILDLIFE RESOURCES

Ministry of Natural Resources Ontario

HURONIA DISTRICT CROWN LAND PLANNING AREA

1000 0 1000 5000 METRES

- Crown Land
- Patented Land
- Provincial Park
- Indian Reserve
- Provincial Highway
- County or Municipal Road
- Local Road
- Crown Land Access Road
- Power Transmission Line
- Hamlet
- Priority Timber Stands
- Dam
- Commercial Outpost
- Recreation Camp
- Trapline Cabin
- Landfill Site
- Crown Land Quarry Permit
- Hydro Power Station
- Water - Power Lease (W.P.L. 51)
- Trent - Severn Waterway Lands
- Significant Biological Area
- Agreement Forest
- Major Deer Wintering Area

ARRY SOUND DISTRICT

BRACEBRIDGE DISTRICT

MINDEN DISTRICT

N

Gibson River Provincial Park

Six Mile Lake Provincial Park

Swift Rapids Deer Yards

Horseshoe Lake Road

SIX MILE LAKE

SEVERN

LAKE COCHICHING

LAKE ST. JOHN

ORILLIA TOWNSHIP

MATCHEDASH TAY TOWNSHIP

NORTH

MARA TOWNSHIP

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Some areas are suitable for planting but require preparation involving scarification. Planting will consist mainly of conifer species (e.g. white pine).

Some road improvement may be required for forest management purposes. These improvements will be limited to temporary resource access roads connected to existing facilities such as the Swift Road, cottage access roads and municipal roads. These temporary roads will permit equipment access required for management operations as well as for removal of wood products.

The Huronia District Land Use Guidelines estimated that 47,000 m^3/yr could potentially be produced from the Crown land by the year 2020. More detailed examination of the forest resources has indicated that the production forest area (6500 ha) is actually only 30 percent of that identified in the District Land Use Guidelines. In addition, the current estimate of the average productivity of these forests is much lower than the estimate that was used in the District Land Use Guidelines. These changes will be reflected in the next revision of the guidelines. Direct comparison of the Crown land and Huronia District targets is complicated by the fact that the two are based upon different years; 2000 and 2020 respectively.

3.1.4 Forest Management Strategy

(i) A draft Crown land forest management plan has been prepared by Forest Management staff for approval by the District Management Committee. This plan contains information describing the forest species/working groups and the silvicultural treatments to be applied to production forests. Treatments include harvest cutting, tending, site preparation and planting. It also identifies the location of where production of forest products will occur.

(ii) Initially management operations will occur in priority timber stands with existing road access (Figure 1). In order to improve the condition of the forest, tending and improvement operations will be carried out on approximately 170 ha of Crown forest annually, if funding permits.

(iii) Forest management operations have incorporated management techniques that benefit wildlife habitat, especially in deer wintering yards. Within these yards, habitat improvement will be the single most important forest management objective. Production of forest products may not always result from operations in these areas. Forestry staff will collaborate with wildlife staff on the specific objectives and operating procedures for each project in these areas.

(iv) Within provincially significant areas of natural and scientific interest (ANSIs) stand improvement and commercial harvest cuts will not occur. Protection of the significant resources for which each ANSI has been recognized is an over-riding management objective. The only forest management activity which may occur in these areas are the spraying of stands or portions of stands to control forest diseases or insects when they threaten to destroy significant features and fire

suppression. Consultation with parks and recreation program staff will occur prior to any spraying.

(v) Within regionally significant ANSIs all proposed forest management activities are subject to review by parks and recreation program staff to determine if they will have any detrimental impact upon ANSI values.

(vi) Forest management operations will, whenever possible, avoid all recognized recreational trails. When impact on these trails cannot be prevented or avoided, repairs to trail surfaces will be implemented after completion of operations.

3.2 MINERAL AGGREGATE

3.2.1 Objective

The objective for mineral aggregate production on the Crown land is to provide sufficient supplies to meet anticipated local demand with minimal disturbance to natural resources.

3.2.2 Target

No target has been established because all production of mineral aggregate from Crown land is consumed within the local area where demands are highly variable but comparatively low.

3.2.3 Resource Analysis

Annual production of mineral aggregate from five pits located on Crown land has ranged from 1,000 to 5,500 metric tonnes in recent years. These pits are administered by quarry permits issued under the authority of the Mining Act. This act is administered by the Ministry of Northern Development and Mines but authority to issue quarry permits for Crown land has been delegated to the Ministry of Natural Resources.

The potential for mineral aggregate production from the Crown land is very low, and is limited to small, scattered pockets of sand and gravel. Small quarries producing crushed stone have operated in the past and with the planned twinning of Highway 69 demand for this product may temporarily increase significantly.

3.2.4 Mineral Aggregate Management Strategy

(i) Control of mineral aggregate utilization from Crown land will be achieved through the Mining Act and by district policy. Holders of quarry permits are required to rehabilitate depleted sites to the satisfaction of ministry staff.

(ii) There will be no aggregate extraction in provincial parks or within provincially significant Areas of Natural and Scientific Interest (ANSI). Within regionally significant ANSIs extraction may occur but only after consultation with parks and recreation staff.

3.3 FISHERIES

3.3.1 Objectives

The objectives of the fisheries management program for the water bodies of the planning area (excluding Georgian Bay) are to:

- provide sport fishing opportunities to meet the demand within the limits of a wisely managed resource;
- provide economic benefits related to production of baitfish by maintaining the current production; and
- to prevent the extinction of any native species

There is no existing or proposed commercial fishery within the waters of the planning area.

3.3.2 Targets

To provide 143,000 angler days of sport fishing annually from the lakes and rivers of the Crown land planning area by the year 2000 and to maintain current fishing success rates of 0.5 kg/angler day to yield 71,000 kg of fish per year.

To provide 15000 kg baitfish annually.

To ensure that no native fish species become extinct.

3.3.3 Resource Analysis

Sport fishing occurs throughout the planning area but four waterbodies (Six Mile Lake, Sparrow Lake, Gloucester Pool and the Severn River) are particularly important. Together they represent 70 percent of the 7200 ha of water area and 75 percent of fishing activity in the study area.

The area currently supports 124,000 angler days of sport fishing annually and the harvest of sport fish resulting from this activity is estimated to be 62,000 kg. The area is estimated to provide 25% of the sport fishing in Huronia District.

The lakes and rivers of the study area are situated on the Canadian Shield. It is recognized that these water bodies are generally less productive than those in non-shield areas to the south. The Severn River system, Sparrow Lake, Little Lake and Gloucester Pool are considered to be the most productive lakes in the study area.

Sport fish found in the area include walleye, yellow perch, largemouth bass, smallmouth bass, black crappie, northern pike, muskellunge, and lake trout. In many of the smaller lakes largemouth bass and yellow perch are the only sport species present. Smallmouth bass, largemouth bass, walleye and northern pike are more common in the larger lakes. Muskellunge are found throughout the Severn River as well as in Long and Morrison Lakes while black crappie are found in Gloucester Pool and Dumbell Lake. Some of the smallest remote lakes do not contain sport fish species.

The larger more productive water bodies tend to be under-fished. This is occurring in spite of good accessibility. Fish populations in many of the smaller inland lakes may be subject to over exploitation even though access is restricted (walk/canoe/fly-in methods).

The target for sport fishing represents twenty-one percent of the Huronia District target for the year 2000 and is a 15 percent increase over the current level of activity. The district target represents a 70 percent increase over 1980 levels (last census). The waters of the planning area have very good potential to provide quality sport fishing opportunities as measured by angler success rates. While increases in fishing pressure are likely to occur on most waters, it may have the greatest impact on the small inland lakes.

The target for the planning area can be achieved if anglers will switch to underutilized species and if introduction of new species to some inland lakes is successful.

The impact of acid rain on district water bodies is currently unknown. Collection of data, over an extended period combined with information derived from studies conducted in other areas, will be required to permit accurate evaluations.

Management priorities will favour rehabilitation programs for those high quality fisheries with the highest utilization rates and where populations are under pressure. Within the planning area the Severn River system and Six Mile Lake are the most heavily fished water bodies.

The commercial harvesting of baitfish in the planning area is a minor activity comprising only four percent of the district harvest (not including Lake Simcoe). Three licenced bait fishermen are active in the area.

There are no known endangered fish species in the planning area.

3.3.4 Fisheries Management Strategy

This Crown land fisheries management strategy will be coordinated with the Huronia District Fisheries Management Plan. Changes in targets may be required due to fisheries assessment information. Specific projects required to implement the strategies of this plan will be set out in an implementation schedule in the District Fisheries Management Plan.

The following management measures are to be directed, where appropriate, at the water bodies of greatest importance: Sparrow Lake, Gloucester Pool/Black Lake, Six Mile Lake, Severn River, McCrae Lake, Long Lake, Woodland Lake.

(i) Known areas of critical spawning and nursery habitat will be protected whenever possible. These areas are most threatened on water bodies with cottage and permanent residential development on the shoreland.

Dredging to facilitate boat access, dumping of fill in water, and removal of aquatic vegetation to create structures or to create vegetation free swimming and boating areas are the three key activities to be controlled. Control of habitat destruction will be achieved primarily through enforcement of regulations under the Fisheries Act and/or the Public Lands Act.

(ii) Fisheries resource data collection and analysis will be a major activity. Population, habitat and fishing pressure are the elements which will be studied most intensively. The impact of acid rain on fisheries will be evaluated on the basis of study results obtained from outside the planning area and combined with data collected locally.

(iii) Stocking of hatchery reared fish and transferring adults from one lake to another may be undertaken as a means of rehabilitating reduced populations and/or establishing new stocks. Stocking will be used only where it is believed that self sustaining populations may result. Lake trout will likely be the only hatchery reared species stocked and Six Mile, Woodland and McCrae Lakes have been identified as most suited for this management technique. Adult transfers will involve largemouth bass and northern pike. Target water bodies have not yet been identified.

(iv) Projects designed to artificially improve/create spawning and nursery habitat on all water bodies in the planning area will be encouraged and supported by the ministry through the Community Fisheries Improvement Program. The target species for these projects will usually be walleye and muskellunge.

(v) Management techniques may be needed to reduce excessive fishing pressure on inland lakes. Limiting the number of boat caches on specific lakes through a licencing system and instituting catch and release regulations for some lakes will be the two primary techniques considered.

(vi) Within Provincial Parks fisheries management will conform to Ontario Provincial Parks Planning and Management Policies and to the management plan for each park. Baitfish harvesting will not be permitted within Provincial Parks. Some fisheries assessment activities may be conducted.

(vii) Fisheries management proposals for provincially significant life science areas of natural and scientific interest (ANSIs) will be

reviewed by parks staff. Generally, sport fishing and baitfish harvesting will be permitted in ANSIs as will fisheries assessment activities but some management activities may be excluded including the introduction of new species.

Within regionally significant ANSIs most fisheries management activities will be permitted but prior consultation with parks and recreation staff will be required.

(viii) Fisheries management programs which may affect inter-regional water bodies will be discussed and coordinated with ministry staff in the Minden, Bracebridge and Parry Sound Districts.

3.4 WILDLIFE

3.4.1 Objectives

The objective of the wildlife management program is to provide opportunities for social and economic benefits from wildlife oriented recreation and fur harvest consistent with the maintenance of healthy wildlife populations.

More specifically they are to:

- provide an increased number of high quality hunting opportunities;
- maintain or increase the current production of high quality fur pelts from wild furbearer populations;
- maintain the diversity of wildlife species; and
- provide for wildlife viewing, scientific investigation and educational opportunities.

3.4.2 Targets

- To provide, by the year 2000, 10,000 opportunities of hunting recreation per annum. This will consist of 4,100 opportunities of small game hunting, 2,200 opportunities of waterfowl hunting, 2,800 opportunities of big game hunting and 900 opportunities of archery hunting.
- To manage populations of furbearers and produce an average annual harvest of 5,100 pelts.
- To ensure no provincially rare and endangered wildlife species become extinct.

3.4.3 Resource Analysis

Current hunting activities (9,000 occasions) consist of 3,600 small game, 1,950 waterfowl and 2,700 big game hunting occasions using

shotguns and rifles. The area also supplies 750 big game hunting occasions for archers. White tailed deer and black bear are the only big game species sought by hunters in the area.

Targets for the Crown land represent 28 percent of the big game and five percent each for small game and waterfowl hunting opportunities as stated in the Huronia District Land Use Guidelines. The Crown land targets represent increases of 13 percent in small game and waterfowl and four percent in big game hunting opportunities. The increases for small game and waterfowl hunting parallel increases in the district targets. While no overall increase in big game hunting is projected for the district a small increase in this activity is likely to occur on Crown land as a result of restrictions on private land elsewhere in the district shifts demand. A district target for archery hunting will be developed and included in the DLUG. Currently, five percent of the district's archery hunting occasions occur on Crown land.

Hunting opportunities are influenced by wildlife numbers, suitable habitat availability, access and type and length of seasons. The potential for improving wildlife habitat is fair to good and is concentrated in two large significant biological areas totalling approximately 8,000 ha. These areas, as well as numerous smaller ones, are characterized by greater soil depths and a wider variety of vegetative types capable of satisfying the habitat requirements of a diverse mixture of wildlife species. The planning area contains a complex network of water resources including ponds, marshes, bogs and swamps which support a resident waterfowl population. Many of these are staging areas for migrating waterfowl.

While the entire Crown land area has a liberal open season on a variety of game species, lack of access to the interior restricts utilization. Small game hunting opportunities are thought to be most constrained by this. A trend toward increased use of seasonal residences as hunting camps will assist in achievement of the big game and waterfowl hunting targets. Targets reflect anticipated increases in cottage based hunting activity and greater numbers of hunting opportunities that will result from habitat improvement efforts.

A continuing increase in the planning area moose population is considered significant and if the trend continues, may lead to the introduction of a hunting season in the area.

The average annual fur harvest on Crown land is approximately 4,570 pelts from 12 registered traplines.

The target for Crown land fur production represents 15 percent of the district target. Both district and Crown land fur targets represent 13 percent increases in production. Fur harvesting in the planning area may be affected by a reduction in the number of experienced trappers and changes in demand. However, there is some potential for increasing the fur harvest without upsetting the population/habitat balance. This potential could be realized more quickly with implementation of intensive furbearer habitat management projects.

One confirmed sighting of the Kirtlands' Warbler has been documented in the planning area. Although the basic habitat requirements of this species are present, quality is considered limited. Annual monitoring of high potential sites will be the basis of a management program for this species.

A total of 172 species of birds including 120 nesting species have been inventoried in the planning area. In addition, 32 herptile species have been observed and eight of these are considered to be significant due to limited population sizes.

No targets for wildlife viewing have been established and there are no formal facilities on Crown land providing opportunities. However, it is a popular activity at Six Mile Lake Provincial Park, Gibson River Provincial Nature Reserve and from Crown land access facilities such as roads, canoe routes and access points.

3.4.4 Wildlife Management Strategy

The major management program is the improvement to high quality, diverse wildlife habitats particularly significant biological areas and wetlands for both game and non-game species.

The largest significant biological area (Figure 1), located in the Townships of Matchedash and Muskoka Lakes and the Town of Gravenhurst, contains the Swift Rapids deer yard and will be a focal point for the program. Other areas, especially in Rama and Georgian Bay Townships will also receive increased management activity. Wetlands occur throughout the Crown land area and while beaver populations directly affect them, they are not threatened by negative impacts.

Major elements of the wildlife management strategy for the Crown land are:

(i) A management plan will be prepared for the Swift Rapids deer yard. Management techniques will be described in this plan. These may include activities such as radio telemetry studies, browse surveys, aerials surveys of core wintering areas, establishment and monitoring of weather stations, cutting for browse production, altering hunting seasons, planting of preferred tree species, maintenance of travel corridors, supplementary feeding in emergency situations, predator control and seeding of forest openings to improve summer food supplies. This plan will be implemented in conjunction with forest management activities whenever appropriate.

(ii) Wildlife program staff will identify Crown land wetlands with the best potential to attract and support native waterfowl populations. Management of these wetlands may involve development and operation of water control structures to enhance productivity. Whenever appropriate Ducks Unlimited will be encouraged to participate in such projects.

(iii) Private individuals and groups will be encouraged to become involved in wildlife management projects through the Community Wildlife Improvement Program.

(iv) Any wildlife management proposed in the provincial parks must conform to park management plans and Provincial Parks Planning and Management Policies and will be reviewed by parks staff.

(v) In managing fur bearers the ministry will continue to work in cooperation with licenced trappers. Annual quotas for key species will be established. Licencees will be encouraged to implement a range of management techniques designed to improve the quality and quantity of harvested pelts (e.g. planting of trees for beaver food stocks).

The ministry will continue to cooperate with trapper councils in offering training opportunities for professional development. No new traplines will be established on the Crown land and existing lines will be maintained whenever possible.

(vi) Wildlife management programs which may involve other districts will be discussed and coordinated with ministry staff in the Minden, Bracebridge and Parry Sound Districts.

(vii) Wildlife management programs in provincially and regionally significant ANSIs will be limited to those which have no impact upon the ANSI values. Management proposals which affect provincially or regionally significant ANSIs will be discussed with parks and recreation program staff prior to their implementation.

(viii) A program to monitor suitable habitat for rare and endangered species will be established. To this end, the ministry will foster cooperative arrangements with local naturalist clubs and amateur field naturalists. To the extent possible the specific habitat requirements of any rare and endangered species documented in the planning area will be protected and improved.

The ministry will encourage scientific research directed at expanding the data base on rare or endangered species present within the district. Consideration will be given to management projects designed to increase populations.

(ix) Significant wildlife management activities which are planned to take place in an area where another program has expressed an interest will be described and circulated to the affected programs for review and when appropriate will require the approval of the District Management Committee.

3.5 AREAS OF NATURAL AND SCIENTIFIC INTEREST (ANSIs)

3.5.1 Objectives

The primary objective of areas of natural and scientific interest is to protect provincially significant elements of the natural and cultural landscape of Ontario.

3.5.2 Targets

To protect the six provincially significant life science ANSIs in the planning area.

3.5.3 Resource Analysis

The ANSI program is a provincial program which is designed to contribute to resource conservation and protection by identifying and protecting natural landscapes and features representing the full range of biological (life science) and geological (earth science) resources.

There are five major physiographic regions with distinct vegetation and landform features in the study area. Various sites have been selected to best represent the range of biological features based on selection criteria such as representativeness, habitat diversity, ecological integrity and special features. There are several representative life science ecosystems which are already protected within provincial parks and federal parks and which also occur on other federal land in the study area (managed by Parks Canada).

ANSIs vary in their level of significance and are designated as either provincially, regionally or locally significant. Provincially significant sites contribute to the achievement of the ministry's protection objective.

For the ANSIs identified on Crown land the ministry will ensure that land uses and activities which occur provide for the protection of the life science features identified in each area. Where they occur on private land, the ministry will promote an understanding of the values and encourage protection by the landowners.

Within the planning area six provincially, six regionally and numerous locally significant life science ANSIs have been identified. No earth science ANSIs of provincial or regional significance have yet been identified. Three of the provincially significant ANSIs are situated on federal land (two on Beausoleil Island and one at Big Chute), one is the Gibson River Provincial Nature Reserve and two are on Crown and private land in Matchedash and Orillia Townships. One of the Regional ANSIs, Red Marsh, is adjacent to Gibson River Provincial Nature Reserve and contains life science features not found in the park. As a result, this ANSI can also contribute to the protection target.

On Crown land outside regulated parks, the Long Lake and Matchedash Crown Land ANSIs have been identified as containing excellent examples of the landform/vegetation relationships of this area and a large number of plant species of special significance. These special features occur in scattered locations and the sites are generally small in size. Of particular importance are the rare Atlantic Coastal Plain plant species situated along the shorelines of Long, Horseshoe and Burrows Lakes. Other sites occur on the Eastern Lakes and may have occurred on others prior to disturbance of shorelines during cottage development. A treed bog and fen is also situated within the Matchedash Crown Land ANSI and contains many rare and unusual plant species.

PARRY SOUND DISTRICT
McCrae Lake Wilderness Area Regional ANSI
Gibson River Nature Reserve Provincial ANSI
Gibson River Provincial Park
Red Marsh Regional ANSI
Lost Channel Regional ANSI
Beausoleil and Associated Islands Provincial ANSI
Six Mile Lake Provincial Park
Big Chute Provincial ANSI
Matchedash Crown Land Special Study Area Provincial ANSI
Horseshoe Lake Road
Island Coastal Till Terrace Provincial ANSI
SEVERN SOUND
Severn River Region Boundary
Port Severn
Lock
MATCHEDASH BAY
TAY TOWNSHIP
TOWNSHIP
RIVER
NORTH
Legend
STUDY AREA
GEORGIAN BAY
LAKE ONTARIO
Lake Simcoe
Toronto
Barrie
Orillia
Parry Sound
Huntsville
Bracebridge
Gravenhurst
Owen Sound
Peterborough
Oshawa
Cobourg
Cambridge
Kitchener
Guelph
Brantford
NOTE: Prepared October 1985
Base information from 1980 National Topographic Series
Cartography by C. Martin
Not for legal purposes
All features are approximate and may not accurately represent the actual surface on the ground.
REVISED: OCTOBER 1986

Figure 2

AREAS OF NATURAL AND SCIENTIFIC INTEREST (ANSI) AND ACCESS FACILITIES

Ministry of Natural Resources Ontario

HURONIA DISTRICT CROWN LAND PLANNING AREA

1000 0 1000 5000 METRES

- Crown Land
- Patented Land
- Provincial Park
- Indian Reserve
- Provincial Highway
- County or Municipal Road
- Local Road
- Crown Land Access Road
- Power Transmission Line
- Hamlet
- Cross-Country Ski Trail (Private)
- Snowmachine Trail (Private)
- Snowmachine Trail (Public)
- Dam
- Commercial Outpost
- Recreation Camp
- Trapline Cabin
- Landfill Site
- Crown Land Quarry Permit
- Hydro Power Station
- Water - Power Lease (WPL 51)
- Trent - Severn Waterway Lands
- Access Point
- Agreement Forest
- Provincial ANSI
- Regional ANSI
- Canoe Route
- Portage

NOTE: ONLY MAINTAINED TRAILS ARE SHOWN, OTHER INFORMAL TRAILS EXIST.

BRACEBRIDGE DISTRICT

MINDEN DISTRICT

Fire Region Boundary

Gibson River Nature Reserve Provincial ANSI

McCrae Lake Wilderness Area Provincial ANSI

Red Marsh Regional ANSI

Lost Channel Regional ANSI

Big Provincial ANSI

Matchedash Crown Land Special Study Area Provincial ANSI

Horseshoe Lake Road

Neipa Lake Regional ANSI

East Mordolphin Regional ANSI

Long Lake Provincial ANSI

Fire Region Boundary

Fire Region Boundary

SEVERN

NORTH

COUCHICHING

LAKE ST. JOHN

MARA TOWNSHIP

REVISED: OCTOBER 1980

3.5.4 ANSI Management Strategy

The protection of representative, undisturbed natural landscapes and special features such as unusual vegetation types is the underlying rationale for areas being identified as ANSIs. The Provincial Parks Act is used to achieve protection objectives either through placing areas under Regulation as provincial nature reserves or through zoning designations and management policies in other classes of parks. Park planning and management policies provide clear direction on how various management objectives are to be achieved. In such cases natural processes are normally allowed to occur. In the Crown land planning area use of the Provincial Parks Act to manage ANSIs through the designation of provincial nature reserves would result in changes to long established resource use patterns including trapping, hunting, and possibly snowmobiling. For this reason, the management strategy for these areas will not employ the Provincial Parks Act. The only exception to this will be the Red Marsh Regional ANSI.

The ANSI management strategy will provide protection for significant life science areas through a combined use of:

- this Crown land management plan;
- completion of forest, vegetation, wildlife and fisheries management plans;
- the Provincial Parks Act;
- the Provincial ANSI implementation strategy; and
- cooperation with federal and private landowners of ANSI areas.

(i) The Red Marsh regional ANSI will be placed in Provincial Parks Act regulations as an addition to the Gibson River Provincial Nature Reserve. This 100 ha ANSI will be managed according to Ontario Provincial Park Planning & Management Policies.

Some resource and recreation use activities (trapping, hunting and snowmobiling) currently occurring in the ANSI will be prohibited. Trapping is considered to be the more significant activity and Huronia District staff will, together with Parry Sound and Bracebridge Districts, attempt to relocate this activity. Lost hunting and snowmobiling opportunities are considered minimal.

(ii) Where they occur on Crown land, provincially significant ANSIs will be managed by excluding the following:

- new access facilities (e.g. roads, trails, parking lots, etc.) Present access facilities will remain and any changes to these will be evaluated against their environmental impact on the biological features. Special efforts will be made to ensure

that trails from the Swift Road to Long Lake are impassible to motorized vehicles.

- forest management other than fire protection and control of forest insects and diseases where they threaten the biological features of the ANSIs;
- staking of mining claims or prospecting;
- disposition of Crown land; and
- removal of sand, gravel, stone or other mineral aggregates.

Trapping, hunting and fishing will be permitted in these ANSIs. All management planning for furbearers, game species and fisheries resources in these areas will include objectives for the protection of the representative and special features.

On going inter-related programs such as water level manipulation and monitoring of Atlantic coastal plain flora and fisheries are part of the operation of the dam on Long Lake. These programs will provide information on which to base long-term management decisions designed to establish optimum habitat conditions for this sensitive flora.

Existing trails for hiking, cross-country skiing and snowmobiling may continue to be routed through these areas, but other motorized vehicles will not be permitted. Any changes or extensions of present trail activities will be reviewed in terms of the protection of these areas.

(iii) Where they occur on private land, the Long Lake and Matchedash Crown Land ANSIs will continue to be recognized in the District Land Use Guidelines as being land of provincial significance for their life science features through the ministry's plan input and review program.

The ministry will provide the available background information on these features to private landowners and will seek their cooperation in achieving protection of these natural areas.

(iv) The provincially significant Beausoleil Island Coastal Till Terrace and the Beausoleil and Associated Islands ANSIs are part of Georgian Bay Islands National Park and are considered to be appropriately protected. Background information will be provided to Parks Canada in order to identify the values which are of provincial interest.

(v) The provincially significant Big Chute ANSI is located largely on federal land. Background biological information and program objectives will be communicated to Parks Canada and a jointly-prepared management plan is recommended as the most effective management strategy for this ANSI.

(vi) Regionally significant ANSIs located on Crown land will be subject to detailed inventory studies to more precisely define the

overall significance of each and to identify any sensitive or special features which may require protection.

Every program planning project within regional ANSIs will require that parks and recreation program staff review them to determine if ANSI values are being adequately protected.

Improvement and commercial harvest cuts will be permitted in regional ANSIs only where it has been determined that no representative or special features will be impacted.

Wildlife habitat management programs involving cutting and/or other types of vegetation management will be permitted only where it can be shown that the ANSI values will be protected.

3.6 PROVINCIAL PARKS

3.6.1 Objectives

The objectives for the two provincial parks in the planning area are consistent with those set out provincially. They are to:

- protect provincially significant elements of the natural and cultural landscape of Ontario;
- provide opportunities for exploration and appreciation of the outdoor natural and cultural heritage of Ontario;
- provide provincial park outdoor recreation opportunities ranging from high intensity day use to low intensity wilderness experiences; and
- provide Ontario's residents and out-of-province visitors with opportunities to discover and experience the distinctive regions of the province.

3.6.2 Targets

The targets are:

To protect provincially significant life science features which contribute to the representation of the vegetative site types in site district 5-7.
To provide opportunities for exploration and appreciation of the outdoor natural and cultural heritage.

To provide annually the following recreation opportunities for Ontario residents and visitors to Six Mile Lake Provincial Park:

Day Use	50,500 swimming opportunities
	18,000 picnicking opportunities
Extended Use	44,800 camping opportunities

3.6.3 Resource Analysis

Six Mile Lake Provincial Park is an 81 ha recreation class provincial park with 190 campsites and a day use capacity of 200 people. Its location on Highway 69 attracts large numbers of travellers. The campground has an annual July/August occupancy rate of 76 percent.

Twinning of Highway 69 will have an impact on the park, in particular on the extreme south end east of the highway and a 16 ha area west of the highway. These two areas may be deleted from the park when highway expansion occurs.

A large block (120 ha) of Crown land to the north of the park could accommodate hiking trails and other low intensity day use recreation activities. In addition, a six ha area adjacent to the existing northwest corner of the park contains several provincially rare plant species.

The park is one of three access points to the Gibson-McDonald canoe route and park staff is responsible for maintenance of campsites and portages on the route. Most of the campsites are situated within the McCrae Lake Wilderness Area and are heavily used. The south half of McCrae Lake and adjacent land are within a regulation under the Wilderness Areas Act which permits the protection and management of special areas in a relatively undisturbed condition.

The Gibson River Provincial Nature Reserve is a 168 ha area southeast of Gibson Lake. As a nature reserve the primary objective for the park is to protect provincially significant life science features. A portion of the Five Winds Touring Club's ski trail network is routed through the park and the parking facility at the end of Muskoka Road 33 is one of three locations in the Huronia District used by club members and other users to access the system. The park is bordered on all sides by Crown land and the Red Marsh regional ANSI is adjacent to the south boundary.

3.6.4. Provincial Park Management Strategy

(i) Two parcels of Crown land with a combined area of 126 ha will be placed in regulation under the Provincial Parks Act as additions to Six Mile Lake Provincial Park. They will be designated Natural Environment Zones and will be managed according to park planning and management policies to provide low intensity day use recreation opportunities while protecting significant life science resources. Any current uses of these land which do not conform with park management policies will be phased out or relocated.

(ii) As a major public attraction within the Crown land planning area, Six Mile Lake Provincial Park will serve as a centre for the distribution of interpretive literature and information dealing with the special features, resource management activities and recreation opportunities of the Crown land.

(iii) District staff will undertake a study of the McCrae Lake Wilderness Area to determine the intensity of recreational uses occurring on and around it, the condition of all campsites and the

health of the fishery resource. From the results of this study a decision will be made on how to facilitate a more effective control of use of the lake and to protect life science values in the buffer area. In the interim, the area currently designated under the Wilderness Areas Act will remain in regulation.

(iv) All resource management and recreation activity planned for the Gibson River Provincial Nature Reserve (including the Red Marsh ANSI) will be subject to the Ontario Provincial Parks Planning and Management Policies. Use of motorized, all terrain vehicles will not be permitted in the park.

(v) Management plans will be prepared for Six Mile Lake Provincial Park and the Gibson River Provincial Nature Reserve. They will state policies governing how resources and facilities in the park are to be managed and developed/re-developed.

3.7 GENERAL RECREATION

3.7.1 Objectives

The ministry provides programs and facilities for a number of recreational activities on Crown land outside provincial parks. The objectives for these programs in the planning area are to:

- encourage and provide opportunities for participation in a wide variety of outdoor recreation activities ranging from those pursued on a day-use basis to those requiring extended periods of time; and

- contribute to the economy of the planning area by stimulating tourism activity.

3.7.2 Targets

Targets for the general recreation activities have not been developed for the Huronia District Crown land.

3.7.3 Resource Analysis

Crown land and adjacent water bodies in the study area provide a high proportion of important general recreation and tourism resources in Huronia District. These include Georgian Bay, the Trent-Severn Waterway, 75 percent of the district's inland lakes and Gibson-McDonald Canoe Route. Cross country skiing, snowmobiling and walking/hiking trails have been developed and 19 official access points are maintained throughout the area to facilitate movement to and from land and water. They provide facilities for boat docking and launching as well as for picnicking.

The access points are located on the Severn River and Six Mile Lake, McDonald Lake and Horseshoe Lake. There are no Crown land access points serving recreationists on the Huronia District portion of

Georgian Bay which has approximately 40 percent of the recreational boating fleet in the province. While marina facilities have increased dramatically over the past ten years, the number of related support facilities has been reduced both on Georgian Bay and the Trent-Severn Waterway. Numerous symptoms of this imbalance are evident, but little data exists to accurately define issues and problem areas on these water bodies. Notable among these problems are over-use/abuse of access point facilities, conflicts between boaters and cottagers, lack of information for boaters, and no controlled mooring areas.

The access point on McDonald Lake receives high levels of use during peak times of the spring and summer seasons. Campers combine with canoeists using the Gibson-McDonald canoe route to create extreme pressure on McCrae Lake, its Crown land campsites and its fishery resource. The access point on the southwest shore of Six Mile Lake adjacent to a small marina is also heavily used by cottagers and anglers.

An extensive recreational trail system (92 km in total) is maintained by the Five Winds Touring Club as a wilderness cross country ski trail. It is also used by hikers during spring, summer and fall seasons. Portions of the system are within three ministry districts (Huronia, Parry Sound and Bracebridge) and can be accessed from each district. Most use of the trails is by club members and all maintenance is carried out by them.

Horseshoe, Ptarmigan and Big Chute snowmobile trails are located on Crown land and have been maintained by the ministry with assistance from the Huronia Association of Recreational Trails (HART).

Use of privately and publicly maintained cross-country ski and snowmobile trails as well as cottage and recreation access roads by all terrain vehicles, particularly, large four-wheel drive vehicles has been identified as a serious problem. Severe damage, in some cases, renders trails impassible.

The Gibson-McDonald is a heavily used canoe route accessible from three points; Six Mile Lake Provincial Park, McDonald Lake access point in Huronia District and the Gibson River/Highway 69 access point in Parry Sound District. Crown land campsites on the Huronia portion of the route are all at McCrae Lake.

Numerous other informal canoe routes are commonly used in the areas north of the Severn River with the river forming a portion of them.

Crown land camping occurs in numerous locations throughout the planning area. Concentrations of heavily used sites occur along the Swift Road and on Long, Horseshoe, Woodland, McCrae, Six Mile and Boleau Lakes.

3.7.4 General Recreation Management Strategy

(i) All existing official access points will be maintained. The maintenance program will ensure that solid wastes are regularly removed, that damaged facilities are repaired or replaced as necessary, that human wastes are properly treated and that safety hazards are eliminated.

(ii) Problems associated with the growth in boating activity are being identified by the public. No provincial policy for dealing with these problems currently exists and there is no defined provincial mandate for the ministry of Natural Resources. When jurisdictional responsibilities have been clarified and provincial policies have been developed, this plan will be amended to define management actions.

(iii) A cooperative access point maintenance program will be designed and implemented as a one or two year experiment. The program may involve cottage owners association(s), marine operators, Parks Canada, canoe clubs or others and will involve a sharing of equipment and day-to-day maintenance responsibilities. An evaluation of this trial against the feasibility of such cooperative programs elsewhere may provide an alternate approach to expensive access point management.

(iv) The staff of Six Mile Lake Provincial Park will continue to collect data on the use of McCrae Lake by canoeists and other recreationists. Concurrently, measures designed to effect control of the number of users on McDonald and McCrae Lakes will be implemented at the McDonald Lake access point. These may include a permit control system administered through Six Mile Lake Provincial Park, reducing the size of the parking lot or using numbered parking spaces. The success of these management techniques will be assessed as part of a comprehensive evaluation of McCrae Lake and the surrounding land.

(v) Trail systems will continue to provide year round opportunities for the public to participate in a range of recreational activities. Development and maintenance by private organizations will be allowed and will be managed through issuance of land use permits. Trail alignments will be reviewed and approved by District Lands Administration staff prior to construction.

(vi) Use of trails on Crown land at any time by motorcycles and vehicles weighing over 500 kg will not be permitted. Problem areas will be signed under the Public Lands Act and appropriate enforcement measures will be instituted. Where necessary, physical barriers will be constructed in strategic locations to prevent access by all terrain vehicles.

(vii) The ministry will continue to manage the Gibson-McDonald as a designated canoe route.

(viii) District Parks staff will evaluate other potential canoe routes in the Crown land planning area to shift pressure away from the Gibson-McDonald route. Evaluation of some routes will involve discussions with staff of Bracebridge District.

(ix) Crown land camping will continue to be an allowable activity. The ministry will continually monitor it to identify problems of over use/abuse. If necessary, an interior access permit system will be implemented.

3.8 LAND ADMINISTRATION

3.8.1 Objectives

The objective for land administration in Ontario is to facilitate the orderly development and conservation of Ontario's land and water resources.

3.8.2 Targets

Specific land administration targets were not developed for the DLUG and therefore have not been included in this plan.

3.8.3 Resource Analysis

Almost all roads constructed on the Crown land provide vehicle access to cottage properties. While no new Crown land cottage lots have been sold in the district since 1968, many existing cottages are not currently served by road. The extension of Muskoka Road No. 34 from White's Falls to Big Chute in 1984 made it economically feasible for 8 new access roads to be built servicing approximately 100 cottages.

Responsibility for road construction and maintenance lies with individuals and groups of cottage owners. The ministry regulates the construction through a location approval process and, with the exception of Rama Township, by issuing work permits under the Forest Fires Prevention Act. Land on which the road is located is retained by the Crown.

Two Crown land resource access roads are maintained by the ministry; Swift Road (12.5 km) and Horseshoe Lake Road (2.5 km). Both provide access for a wide range of recreational activities during spring, summer and fall seasons and both form portions of snowmobile trails in the winter. The Swift Road also provides access to land owned by the Orillia Water, Light and Power Commission and by Parks Canada. Employees of both agencies use the road regularly and it has been periodically used by them during major construction/repair projects at the hydro electric power station and the marine navigation lock.

The Horseshoe Lake Road is closed to vehicle traffic during spring, summer and early fall seasons, but is used by anglers, hikers, cyclists and campers.

Dispositions of Crown land take the form of outright sale and patent of land, the granting of land use permits, leases, licences of occupation and letters of permission. In 1986 no sales, leases or licences of occupation were granted. The District issued 26 land use permits for such uses as Five Winds Touring Club's cross country ski trail network, two privately maintained snowmobile trails, three commercial outpost camps and three recreation camps. Letters of

permission authorized the erecting and maintaining of six small trapline cabins.

3.8.4. Land Administration Strategy

(i) New cottage access road proposals prepared by cottager associations will be reviewed to ensure that the proposed roads do not have a significant detrimental effect on natural resources. Municipalities will be formally involved in the review of new cottage access roads proposals to permit them to evaluate of the potential impact of proposed roads on municipal services.

(ii) The ministry will encourage multiple use of cottage access roads to achieve resource access objectives. Where temporary forest access roads connect with cottage access roads, funding for repair of roads necessitated by removal of forest products will be secured from the timber operator.

(iii) The Swift Road will be maintained by the ministry as a recreation access road. Orillia Water, Light and Power and Parks Canada will be requested to pay the cost of repairs necessitated by use of the road during any major repair/development projects. If the ministry is unable to maintain the road to suitable safety standards, it will be closed at the Long Lake portage initially. If necessary, the road will be closed at the east side of the County Forest property at the start of the road in Lot 3, Concession 7, Township of Matchedash.

(iv) Horseshoe Lake Road will be maintained as a recreation access road and will be closed to all motor vehicle traffic between April 1 and September 15 each year.

(v) No new permanent access roads will be developed in the Huronia Crown land planning area by the Ministry of Natural Resources. Temporary resource access roads will be developed as needed to achieve forest and wildlife habitat management objectives. These roads will be closed to all vehicle traffic when the management activities are completed. Alignment of temporary roads will avoid lake shores and provide only controlled access during the period of operation. All temporary access road proposals will be subject to approval by the District Management Committee and will be subject to the conditions of the class environmental assessment for access road construction.

(vi) The sale of Crown land will be limited. Where there are no conflicts with ministry programs, disposition of existing filled water lots, shoreline reserves and land required by government agencies and public utilities can occur. An existing commercial operation can also purchase Crown land where it is required to secure the economic viability of the business.

(vii) The disposition of Crown land for private or commercial purposes may be granted only after review and approval by the District Management Committee.

(viii) Dumping of fill and other materials and the construction of docks, marinas or other recreational facilities on Crown land will be regulated under the Public Lands Act.

3.9 WATER

3.9.1 Objectives

The objectives for water management in the Crown land planning area are to:

. protect fisheries and wildlife habitat; and

. protect special botanical features located along shorelines.

3.9.2 Targets

No targets have been established for water management programs.

3.9.3 Resource Analysis

The Crown land water resources are extensive, varied, and in the case of the Severn River, highly significant. Eighty percent of the Crown land area is located in the Severn River drainage basin while the remainder is in the Moon River/Go Home Lake Basin.

The ministry manages only one water control structure at Long Lake. One other dam at Wasdell Falls, is owned by the ministry, but it and 17 others are managed by Parks Canada (Trent-Severn Waterway). The Waterway's water management program is designed to ensure that adequate water supplies are available to satisfy requirements for marine navigation along the Severn River, hydro electric power generation at Swift Rapids, Big Chute and Wasdell Falls, domestic and commercial use and to reduce flooding potentials on Sparrow Lake, Lake St. John, Six Mile Lake and along the Severn River in Washago. A limiting element in the management of the Severn River basin water levels is that the Black River/Head River watershed is completely uncontrolled.

The ministry is concerned with the effects of water level fluctuations on the fishery resource of the Trent-Severn Waterway. The timing and extent of drawdowns by Parks Canada are monitored by the ministry to ensure that spawning and nursery habitat is protected.

The ministry is aware of an historic water course linking Black Lake and the Severn River above Swift Rapids. Blind dams erected during development of the Trent-Severn Waterway, have blocked the flow of water through this channel. Interest in having water diverted from the Severn River into the system has been expressed by residents of the Township of Matchedash.

3.9.4 Water Management Strategy

(i) The ministry will work with the Parks Canada to reduce flooding potentials on Six Mile Lake and other locations.

(ii) Fisheries spawning and nursery habitat in the Severn River and associated water bodies will be monitored and ministry staff will seek the cooperation of Waterway staff in managing water levels to protect them.

(iii) Any diversion of water from the Severn River to Black Lake would require an Environmental Assessment to be undertaken. Any final decision must be made by Parks Canada.

(iv) The Ministry of Natural Resources will cooperate with the Ontario Ministry of Energy in its efforts to fully develop or redevelop the hydro electric power production potential of the Washago dams, Wasdell Falls, Swift Rapids, Big Chute and Port Severn dams.

4. IMPLEMENTATION

Through this resource management plan the ministry has made a commitment to achieving defined objectives and targets for each resource program on the Crown land. The plan also identifies mechanisms designed to ensure that integration of management programs also occurs. The following table summarizes on a program by program basis the items to be implemented and the techniques to be used.

PROGRAM	ITEM/TARGET/COMMITMENT	INTEGRATION MECHANISMS
A. Forest Management	Implement the forest management plan for Crown land. Produce 5,000m^3/yr wood products yearly by 2000. Arrange improvement cuts on 170 ha yearly. Arrange harvest cuts as appropriate.	- Approval of District Management Committee (D.M.C.) required. - Consult with the district wildlife program for work in deer yards and the district parks program for work in regional ANSIs.
B. Fisheries	Prepare a district fisheries management plan. Provide 143,000 angler days of sport fishing/yr. Provide 15,000 kg. baitfish/yr. Protect spawning and nursery habitat. Inventory the resource base. Stock fish and transfer adults. Apply restrictions on fishing pressure.	- Plan review program and coordination with Parks Canada. - Proposals in provincial and regional ANSI reviewed by the program. - Conform to parks planning and management policies in parks.
C. Wildlife	Prepare a management plan for the Swift Rapids deer yard. Provide 10,000 opportunities hunting recreation. Produce 5,100 fur pelts/yr. Prevent extinction of species Conduct habitat improvement on wetlands and significant biological areas.	- Approval of D.M.C. - Consult with the forest management program to improve benefits of forest tending/improvement cuts. - Consult with parks on habitat management programs in provincial and regional ANSIs.
D. ANSIs	Protect six provincially significant ANSIs. Add Red Marsh Regional ANSI to Gibson River Provincial Nature Reserve.	- Consultation with Parks Canada regarding management of Provincial ANSIs on federal land.

	Apply management restrictions for two provincial ANSIs on Crown land. Complete monitoring study of Atlantic Coastal Plain Flora on Long Lake, and design dam maintenance schedule accordingly. Have the provincially significant ANSI's withdrawn from staking	- District parks staff will review project proposals of forest management, fisheries and wildlife programs affecting provincial and regional ANSIs. - Consult with Parry Sound and Bracebridge Districts to replace trapping opportunities in the Red Marsh regional ANSI.
E. Provincial Parks	Add 126 ha to Six Mile Lake Provincial Park. Study recreational uses on McCrae Lake. Prepare management plans for provincial parks.	- Consulation with Parry Sound District on the management of McCrae Lake. - Management plans to be reviewed/approved by D.M.C.
F. General Recreation	Maintain the existing access point network. Attempt a cooperative access point maintenance program. Apply controls at the the McDonald Lake access point. Reduce motorized vehicle use.	- Consult with Parry Sound District, the District Municipality of Muskoka and M.T.C. over Crown land access from Highway 69 corridor. - Integrate district parks, fisheries and wildlife enforcement.
G. Land	Regulate cottage access road construction. Maintain the Swift Road. Authorize the location of temporary access roads. Dispose of Crown land using tenure appropriate to need.	- Consult with forest management and wildlife programs on multiple use of cottage access roads and development or stopping up of temporary resource access roads. - D.M.C. to review all dispositions (sales, rentals, leases).

NOTE: The excellent cooperation received from the many individuals and groups who participated in the planning and review process of this document has formed a basis for an ongoing liaison program. This program will be operated in an informal manner between parties whenever consultation is required.

5. PLAN REVIEW AND AMENDMENT

The ministry will proceed to implement the management strategies of this plan through to the year 2000.

Every five years the plan will be subject to a review which will seek to answer three questions:

- Are the objectives and targets still considered to be realistic and achievable or have factors changed significantly?
- Are the management strategies producing the objectives and targets, in particular the protection of the ANSI values?
- Is integrated resource management contributing to the achievement of targets?

Depending upon the answers to these questions, the plan may be amended. When required, the amending process will be coordinated by the District Management Committee. As provided for in various management strategies in this plan, data collection and analysis may be required before a decision to amend can be made.

Minor alterations which do not represent significant changes in management strategy or in the utilization of resources will be made on the basis of internal review and approval. Major alterations representing significant changes in targets and/or in management strategies will be made only after public notice has been given. Such notice will provide relevant background information, a statement of the purpose for each proposed amendment and will invite the public to provide input to assist in the amendment process.

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NOTE: A detailed list of reference materials is included in the Background Information Report, Huronia District Crown Land Planning Program.

APPENDIX A: Summary of Public Consultation

PHASE ONE

The public consultation component of the Huronia District Crown Land Planning Program consisted of three phases. Phase one was implemented following distribution of the planning program Terms of Reference document to local interest groups, municipalities, interested individuals and neighbouring districts of the Ministry of Natural Resources. Two forums were hosted by the ministry's Crown land planning team at the Severn Falls Fire Headquarters. Municipal councils and their staff were invited to the first forum on August 14th, 1985. Its format consisted of a presentation by selected planning team members and a question and answer period. The second forum on August 22, 1985 followed an open house format and the local interest groups were invited to send representatives. Attendance at the two forums was approximately 16 and 60 respectively.

The principal objectives of this phase were to inform the concerned publics of the planning programs start-up, purpose, objectives and timetable and to canvas them for issues/concerns requiring attention during the program.

A meeting with Matchedash Township Council also occurred on August 15, 1985 to discuss the council's concerns.

Following Phase One, an initial listing of the issues and concerns identified to date was prepared. It contained the following items:

1. Disposition of Crown land
   a. to municipalities
   b. to private concerns via municipalities
   c. special cases involving very small areas

2. Access
   a. to Crown land from water
      - re-establish maintenance program for existing network of access points
      - expand the network in response to greatly increased size of recreation boating public
      - add a network of mooring pins to system
   b. to water from Crown land
      - heavy use of some existing points
      - review rationale behind seasonally restricted access to Horseshoe Lake
      - expansion of network

3. Resource Access Roads
   - maintenance of existing roads
   - new road requirements for forest access, wildlife management, fire management

4. Significant biological species and species habitat - identification and protection.

5. Possible designation of candidate Provincial Park status for provincially significant ANSIs.
   - Identification of other options for ensuring protection

6. Trail based recreation activities
   - traditional activities - i.e. snowmobiling, cross-country skiing, hiking.
   Ongoing trail construction and maintenance responsibilities.

7. Trail based recreation activities
   - new activities i.e. All terrain cycling and four-wheeling.
   Control of activity presently occurring on inappropriate locations.
   Possible designation of a Crown land area for these activities.

8. Canoe routes:
   1. Management of use of Gibson-McDonald route to protect shoreline and reflect system capacity.
   2. Designation and promotion of a new route in Township of Muskoka Lakes and Town of Gravenhurst to draw pressure off Gibson-McDonald.

9. Water management
   - flood reduction on Black and Head Rivers and Sparrow Lake
   Flow augmentation through Black Lake utilizing a derelict system through Matchedash Township from the Severn River.

10. Fisheries management in inter-regional lakes i.e. Brotherson, Narrow, McCrae & Sparrow.

11. Cottage access roads
    New proposals

12. Trapping - Maintenance of status quo vs. reduction of activity.

13. Identification of opportunities for development of commercial, recreation related, business.

14. Tea Lake - access from Severn River

15. Identification of areas with agricultural potential.

16. Implementation - will adequate support in terms of funding and staff positions be provided to deliver the plan's programs?

17. Fisheries management in Long Eastern, Boleau, Woodland Lakes.
    Maintenance of fishing opportunities and control of over-utilization of outpost camps.

18. Deer habitat management - more effort is required especially for management of small satellite yards.

The above was then condensed by the ministry's planning team to create the list upon which the Issues Discussion Paper, June 1986 was based.

PHASE TWO

Phase two of the public consultation component was based upon and began with public release of two documents; Issues Discussion Paper and the Background Information Report. The intent of the discussion paper was,.."to stimulate an exchange of ideas between the Ministry of Natural Resources and other government agencies, local residents,...resource users, with an interest in the management of the Crown land..." The background report contains six maps as well as general descriptive information on all natural and cultural resources of the planning area. It serves as the primary supporting reference source for the discussion paper and the management plan in preparation.

In the discussion paper each of the 11 issues was described and appropriate optional management scenarios presented. For each issue a preferred management option was identified along with a statement of rationale.

Three hundred copies of each of the two documents were mailed to local and provincial interest groups (also includes selected national interest groups), government agencies, municipalities and interested individuals. An internal MNR circulation to neighbouring districts and Algonquin Region and to Executive Coordinators and the Policy and Planning Secretariat also occurred.

The Huronia District Office received 82 documented submissions. This includes verbal submissions each of which has been recorded on a Record of Verbal Transaction form. It also includes eight submissions from other MNR offices.

The total public input originated as follows:

Local Interest Groups	19
Municipalities	4
Provincial Interest Groups	7
Government Agencies	9
Individuals	29
Others	6
Subtotal	74
MNR	8
Total	82

The following briefly summarizes the dominant point of view on each of those issues which have become the important or major ones. The ministry response as represented by proposed management strategy is also presented.

1. Life Science Areas of Natural and Scientific Interest (ANSIs).

Public response indicated that use of the Provincial Parks Act ie. designation of nature reserve parks would be unacceptable if trapping, hunting and fishing opportunities were lost as a result.

The Federation of Ontario Naturalists requested that the proposed nature reserves be enlarged to include ecologically viable ecosystems.

The ministry position is that the protection objectives of the ANSI program can be achieved in the planning area without creating negative impacts upon traditional user groups. All ministry programs will be sensitive to the ANSI objectives.

2. Disposition of Crown Land

With few exceptions respondents were opposed to any further dispositions within the planning area.

The land management strategy states that there will be no sales of Crown land for private non-commercial purposes, with minor exceptions. However, where Crown land is clearly required to ensure the economic viability of an existing or new commercial enterprise, land may be sold. Land will also be sold to government agencies and public utilities.

3. Trail Based Recreation

There was very little support from respondents for development of trails for motorized trailing activities. The ministry is proposing to restrict motorcycles and other motorized vehicles weighting more than 500 kg from Crown land. Enforcement, signage and barricades will all be used to implement this strategy.

4. Cottage Access Roads and Access - General

Many respondents expressed opposition to development of any new roads in the planning area. However, some are concerned that they have the same opportunity to obtain road access to their cottage properties as others have had.

The ministry is proposing that new cottage access proposals will be accepted and attempts will be made to find the best possible alignments respecting special vegetative features and other resource values. Access road development by the ministry will be limited to the minimum number of "temporary" access roads needed to achieve resource production targets.

5. Swift Road

Regular users of the road indicate that recreational use of the road is significant and that O.W.L.P. and T.S.W. staff use represents only 10 percent of the traffic. Because of this the ministry is obligated to maintain the facility.

The ministry will endeavour to maintain the road in a safe condition for vehicle traffic. However, financial constraints may

result in less and less maintenance and for public safety the ministry may be forced to barricade it. This would be implemented first at the Long Lake portage.

6. Access Point Network

Problems being created as a result of the rapid increase in recreational boating combined with the lack of an adequate access point network, especially on Georgian Bay and the Trent-Severn Waterway were clearly set out in an excellent brief. Other respondents were supportive of maintaining the network and in the case of some heavily used points, expanding facilities.

The ministry is proposing to maintain the existing network. Expansion of government services to boaters cannot be realized until lines of authority have been defined. The district will continue to monitor the problem.

PHASE THREE

Phase three of the public consultation component was based upon the public release of the Preliminary Management Plan. This document contains general policy statements on environment, integrated resource management, access, tourism/economic development and CORTS policies. These are followed by sections dealing with specific resource management programs; timber, mineral aggregate, fisheries, wildlife, areas of natural and scientific interest, parks, general recreation, land and water. For each resource program, objectives and targets are listed and an analysis section outlines current production and management programs and discusses the resource potential. Finally a management strategy states where and how the objectives and targets will be achieved. In most cases, the strategy selected reflects public response to the management options presented in the Issues Discussion Paper.

Four hundred copies of the draft plan were distributed to national, provincial and local interest groups, landowners, cottage associations, municipalities and interested individuals. An internal MNR circulation to neighbouring districts and Algonquin Region and to Executive Coordinators also occurred. Two public information sessions were held in September following the release of the draft plan as part of the process to produce this final plan document.

The Huronia District office received sixty-five documented submissions. This includes verbal submissions recorded on a Record of Verbal Transaction form. The total public input originated as follows:

National Interest Groups	3
Provincial Interest Groups	3
Local Interest Groups	7
Government Agencies	5
Municipalities	3
Individuals	37
Sub Total	58
MNR	7
Total	65

Public response to the Preliminary Management Plan has been used by the planning team in the process of refining the draft plan to produce this final plan.

The following briefly summarizes the dominant comments received and the ministry response as represented by the management strategy.

1. Areas of Natural and Scientific Interest (ANSIs)

Public response was varied on this issue with the Federation of Ontario Naturalists and the Ontario Naturalist Club requesting that the provincially significant ANSIs be designated as Provincial Parks.

The Canadian Botanical Association was pleased with the proposed protection policies of ANSIs in terms of access and consumptive use.

Local area trappers were supportive of the ANSI policies but were concerned with the removal of the Red Marsh area from a registered trapline.

The ministry's position continues to be that the protection objectives of the ANSI program can be achieved in the planning area with minimal impact upon traditional user groups. The ministry with neighbouring districts will attempt to relocate lost trapping opportunities due to the designation of Red Marsh as part of the Gibson River Nature Reserve Provincial Park.

2. Disposition of Crown Land

The majority of submissions to the preliminary plan opposed any further sale of Crown land. However, some local municipalities indicated Crown land should be made available to permit some future economic development initiatives within the planning area.

The land administration strategy states that there will be no sale of Crown land with the exception of shoreline reserves, some water lots, land required by other government agencies, public utilities and for commercial enterprises where it must be clearly established that Crown land is required to secure its economic viability.

3. Access

The majority of respondents suggested access into Crown land areas be severely limited only to walk-in/canoe/fly/snowmobile. No new roads should be constructed and four-wheelers/motorcycles be banned from using Crown land.

No new permanent Crown land access roads will be developed by MNR. Temporary access roads will be developed as needed and will be closed as operational activities are completed.

Cottage access roads may be constructed provided they do not have a significant detrimental effect on natural resources.

The use of trails on Crown lands by motorcycles and vehicles weighing over 500 kg will not be permitted.

4. Canoe Routes/McCrae Lake

Concern was expressed by the Barrie Canoe Club and various individuals that the Gibson-MacDonald canoe route is over-used. Suggestions were made that an alternate route should be developed to relieve pressure on this route.

The ministry will continue to manage the Gibson-McDonald as a designated canoe route. The district will evaluate other potential canoe routes in the planning area to shift pressure away from the Gibson-McDonald route.

The district will continue to collect use data by canoeists and other recreationists of McCrae Lake and may institute measures to control the number of users when necessary.